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Date: November 14, 2006

To: Rick Thompson, Director
Board of Directors
Hi-Line Home Programs, Inc.

From: Sandra L. Carpenter, QIS

Subject: Comprehensive Evaluation of Hi-Line Home Programs Child & Family Services

This review consists of a summary of the information collected through out the year, from file reviews onsite (October 2006) and from the visits I was able to have with some of the families you serve. I found very high performance with the standards outlined in Montana's Comprehensive Evaluation Process.

I really enjoyed meeting the families and seeing HLHP FSS's work with the families. The randomly chosen families all had high praises for the services they had received. Some comments I noted are below and express the dedication and commitment felt by the families:

"It's a stress reliever to have them...getting help with different referrals."
"My FSS helps find places I never thought to look for help."
"I can call anytime, anywhere and she'll always get back to me."
"I would not want any other FSS other than _____."

It was clear that HLHP staff is dedicated to the families they serve and with that dedication, meaningful relationships are built. These relationships become so vital in securing the necessary resources to achieve the best possible outcomes.

I want to thank HLHP and its staff for the wonderful cooperation and communication through out the year and while on-site. As always, if you have any questions, comments or concerns, please do not hesitate to call. I look forward to working with HLHP this coming year.

cc: Erica Swanson, Child & Family Specialist
Dain Christianson, Region 1 Manager
John Zeeck, Quality Assurance
Tim Plaska, Bureau Chief
Perry Jones, Medicaid Waiver Specialist

Contract File

**Hi-Line Home Programs, Inc.
Comprehensive Evaluation of Family Education and Support Services
FY 2006**

Consumer Satisfaction Surveys

The summary of consumer surveys conducted by HLHP shows excellent parental satisfaction with services provided. Families felt involved with the IFSP process and felt that they could talk with their FSS about problems or concerns.

Family Support Services Advisory Council (FSSAC) Input:

Region 1 is without a representative at this time.

Home Visits/Family Contacts:

During visits with families, they demonstrated that they generally understood the various processes involved in receiving services, were family oriented and felt that if they did have a question or concern that they could easily get the answer from their FSS. They were involved in the IFSP process and were involved with the hiring/training of hab aides and/or respite providers. Families knew of the grievance procedure. They knew that participation in services were voluntary. All knew that their records were confidential and that they could access them at any time.

Families understood that Part C services ended at age 3 or when they no longer needed services but had difficulty understanding the differences with Part B services.

All files were complete and had documentation of contacts made with or on behalf of the family. Contacts are often many, especially in times of crisis. See attached table on total contacts made in FY 2006 in all service areas. Contacts and family verification of coordination of services often exceeded the standard. (QAOS #1) Choice of provider documentation was present in all files sampled.

Internal Evaluation:

Internal monitoring tracks areas such as initial family contacts and eligibility issues. HLHP has an excellent data base that is kept up to date and serves to show compliance with implementation time lines.

Licensing Information:

HLHP does not do placements; they do work with families who have children placed through Child & Family Services and those homes are licensed as required.

Financial Audits:

HLHP is qualified as a low-risk auditee. The FY 2005 audit showed no findings or questioned costs in the report.

HLHP has steadily increased cash reserves. The defensive interval ratio for 2005 was 6.06. The savings indicator ratio numbers from 2001 – 2005 would be considered above average. Assets increased in all years since 2001. These three facts indicate the funds received may be more than needed for the services provided. A reduction in service charges or an increase in services may be warranted.

Family Support Specialist Certification:

All FSS's in the sample had comprehensive certifications and are current.

Crisis Response Information:

HLHP addresses emergency issues with families as they arise. Some families have medical emergencies while others may have behavioral emergencies. All are supported by HLHP, often above and beyond the call of service. Additionally, HLHP has fully implemented the new Incident Management Policy.

Other:

HLHP completed 32 Child Find activities in FY 2006. A total of 235 children in Northeastern Montana were screened. Of those children, approximately 3 referrals were made to HLHP. Evidence shows referrals made to other services and agencies as well.

A total of 84 referrals for Part C and General Fund services were made in FY 2006 with the majority coming from Social Workers in Child & Family Services and medical facilities. This represents a decrease by 8 from the previous year. Of those referred, Part C had 58 referrals and General Fund 26.

Waiting list updates are submitted to the Regional Office each month and notification regarding changes to service is on a Client Status form.

Proof of liability was available for those responsible for transportation. HLHP has a training protocol in place for all staff. Hab aide staff for specific individuals also receives this training and it is documented clearly in file.

Policies and procedures for HLHP are available and reflect Federal and State regulations. HLHP has developed many brochures that aid families in understanding the different services and what their rights and responsibilities are.

HLHP was accredited by CARF in 2000 for a 3 year accreditation. HLHP has chosen to not go through accreditation at this time.

File Review of Specific Services:

Files were reviewed in accordance to the Montana Evaluation Process for Family Education and Support Services. A total of 15 files were reviewed. This included 5 files each from Part C, FES, and IFES and included 2 children who exited Part C and those in transition to other services. Also reviewed were 2 files of children not eligible for Part C. Those not eligible were referred to other services and/or agencies.

There are no significant issues to report as a result of the file review. A summary follows:

Overview of Part C:

Eligibility is determined by various evaluation and assessments and is consistent with eligibility guidelines under the state definition of Part C (established condition, 50% delay in one developmental area, or 25% delays in two developmental areas). Children are exited when they become 3 years of age and there is documented evidence for transition planning to other services as appropriate.

Contact is made with families within 2 working days of initial referral with evaluations and initial IFSP's in place within 45 days. While IFSP's are standardized, they are clearly family oriented and show service objectives relating to child and family needs and transition goals in place as appropriate.

Overview of Intensive Family Education & Support (IFES):

Eligibility is clearly documented and eligibility notes sent to regional office. Services are very family oriented. Children can be served in this program until the age of 22; families all knew this and transition plans are in place for several who are making the move to adult services. HLHP is to be commended for the amount of extra work these transitions often need. The transition process can be complicated and difficult for families to comprehend and HLHP is there to educate and support as needed.

IFSP's have objectives for habilitation and are implemented in a timely manner. If needs change or crisis occur, IFSP's are modified at least every 6 months. In the case of 1 family, there was tremendous effort on HLHP part to meet the ever changing needs of with compassion and understanding as was clearly evidenced in the contact logs.

Cost plans are revised at least every 6 months. Adaptive equipment & environmental modifications generally meet waiver criteria (not room & board, no general utility for someone without a disability & relate specifically to the disability). The one possible exception I found was a laptop computer purchased for . It was not clear that this was a piece of adaptive equipment that had no general utility. I do not plan on citing this instance but want to suggest that HLHP look carefully and document the need. In this case, I was not certain that the intended use of the laptop was actually carried out and would suggest an actual objective that can be measurable.

Overall, IFES services are meeting and exceeding the expectations of the standards in all areas. The strengths are in the individual contacts with FSS and the quality of support coordination with other services & agencies.